

## Unattended Children Policy

The Canaan Town Library welcomes library use by children. Staff members are available to assist children with library materials or services. The Library desires to provide a safe and appropriate environment for visitors of all ages. The Library, however, is a public building with staff trained to provide public library services. The Library is not equipped-and it is not the Library's role to provide long- or short-term childcare.

For the safety and comfort of children, a responsible adult or caregiver should accompany children while they are using the Library. For our purposes a caregiver can be a responsible person of age 14 or older. While in the Library, parents and caregivers are responsible for monitoring and regulating the behavior of their children. **Children under the age of 8 will not be allowed in the library without a parent or caregiver. Children under the age of 5 must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver while using the children's area or visiting any other area of the library.**

- Library staff members will be guided by this policy in situations, such as:
- An unattended child is found frightened or crying in the Library.
- An unattended child is perceived to be endangering him or herself, or that another person in the library poses a perceived threat to the unattended child.
- An unattended child exhibits specific inappropriate behavior.
- An unattended child has not been met by a responsible caregiver at closing time.

After evaluating the situation, Library staff members will attempt to contact the parent or guardian of an unattended child. In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the child will be placed in the care of the Canaan Police Department.

*Accepted by Canaan Town Library Trustees, February 25, 2009*